CLAIM AMENDMENTS

Claim 1 (Previously Presented)

An image forming method comprising:

forming a toner image by developing with a developer containing a toner a latent image on a photoreceptor comprising a layer formed on a substrate;

transferring the toner image to a recording medium on which the toner image is recorded; and

fixing the toner image;

wherein the average circular degree of the toner is not less than 0.94;

the toner contains a wax comprising an ester of a carboxylic acid having carbon atoms of not less than 16 or an ester of an alcohol having carbon atoms of not less than 16;

the layer contacts the toner in the developing step;

the layer contains hydrophobic silica particles having a number average of primary particle diameter in the range of about 1 nm or more and less than 100 nm; and

the surface roughness Ra of the layer is not less than 0.02 μm and less than 0.1 μm.

Claim 2 (Canceled)

Claim 3 (Original)

The image forming method of claim 1, wherein the toner contains a metal salt of fatty acid.

Claim 4 (Cancelled)

Claim 5 (Original)

The image forming method of claim 1, comprising removing the toner remained on the photoreceptor by a cleaning device.

Claim 6 (Original)

The image forming method of claim 5, wherein the cleaning device includes a cleaning blade.

Claim 7 (Original)

The image forming method of claim 6, wherein the cleaning blade is disposed so as to contact to the photoreceptor in the counter direction to the rotating direction of the photoreceptor.

Claim 8 (Previously Presented)

The image forming method of claim 5, wherein the cleaning device comprises an elastic rubber blade or a brush roller, and removing the toner remained on the photoreceptor is carried out by touching either of the elastic rubber blade or the brush roller to the photoreceptor.

Claim 9 (Original)

The image forming method of claim 8, wherein the thickness of the fiber of the brush roller is from 6 denier to 30 denier.

Claim 10 (Original)

The image forming method of claim 8, wherein the density of the fiber of the brush roller is from 4.5×10^2 f/cm^2 to 15.5×10^2 f/cm^2.

Claim 11 (Original)

The image forming method of claim 8, wherein the pressure of the elastic rubber blade to the photoreceptor is from 5 g/cm to 30 g/cm.

Claim 12 (Canceled)

Claim 13 (Original)

The image forming method of claim 1, wherein the toner has an average circular degree of from 0.96 to 0.99.

Claim 14 (Original)

The image forming method of claim 1, wherein the standard deviation of the circular degree is not more than 0.10.

Claim 15 (Original)

The image forming method of claim 1, wherein the wax contains at least one of pentaerythrytol tetrastearate, pentaerythrytol tetrabehenate, pentaerythrytol dibehenate, pentaerythrytol tribehenate, neopentyl glycol dibehenate, a condensation product of nonanediol, sebacic acid and stearyl alcohol, and a condensation compound of decanediol, azelaic acid and stearyl alcohol.

Claim 16 (Original)

The image forming method of claim 3, wherein the metal salt of fatty acid contains at least one of aluminum stearate, calcium stearate, potassium stearate, magnesium stearate, barium stearate, lithium stearate, zinc stearate, copper stearate, lead stearate, nickel stearate, strontium stearate, cobalt stearate, cadmium stearate, zinc oleate, manganese oleate, iron oleate,

cobalt oleate, copper oleate, magnesium oleate, lead oleate, zinc palmitate, cobalt palmitate, copper palmitate, magnesium palmitate, aluminum palmitate, calcium palmitate, zinc linolate, cobalt linolate, calcium linolate, zinc ricinolate, cadmium ricinolate and lead caproate.

Claim 17 (Original)

The image forming method of claim 16, wherein the toner contains the metal salt of fatty acid in an amount of from 0.01 to 10% by weight.

Claim 18 (Currently Amended)

The image forming method of claim 1, wherein the method comprises the steps of:

forming a plurality of latent images on ~~plural~~ a plurality of photoreceptors, each of said latent images formed on one of said photoreceptors and each of said photoreceptors is a photoreceptor of Claim 1,

forming a plurality of toner images by developing each of ~~the~~ said latent images with the toner of Claim 1; and

transferring the toner images onto the recording medium.

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Claim 19 (Currently Amended)

The image forming method of claim 1, wherein the layer contains the ~~inorganic~~ <u>hydrophobic silica</u> particles having a number average primary particle diameter of from 1 nm to less than 100 nm.